

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

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Executive Summary

Federal Agency Name

NOS Integrated Ocean Observations System (IOOS)

Funding Opportunity Title

FY 2026 Ocean Technology Transition Program

Announcement Type

Competitive

Funding Opportunity Number

NOAA-NOS-IOOS-2026-32698

Assistance Listing Number(s)

11.012

Dates

Letters of Intent (LOI) are highly recommended but not required. The requested letters of intent (LOI) should be submitted via this Google Form. The form must be received by 11:59 PM (EDT) on April 27, 2026.

The form to submit an LOI can be found at <https://forms.gle/8dB4jY1dLwrPiNQC9> (Copy and paste this link into your web browser.) Please contact the Program Manager at tiffany.c.vance@noaa.gov if you have any problems submitting this form.

Full proposals must be received no later than 11:59 PM (EDT) on July 15, 2026.

Funding Opportunity Description

Request for Applications Description: The U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®) is a national and regional partnership working to provide ocean, coastal and Great Lakes observations, data, tools, and forecasts to improve safety, enhance the economy, and protect our environment. To increase observational and technical capabilities we need smart investments to innovate sensors, data management, decision support products, and other technical capabilities that will improve our ability to monitor and forecast environmental conditions with greater efficiency. The primary objective of IOOS' Ocean Technology Transition Project (OTT) is to reduce the Research to Operations/Commercialization transition period for ocean observing, product development, and data management technologies for the ocean, coastal and Great Lakes. The term 'Technologies' includes: ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes sensors, information technology (data management, data visualization), platform enhancement, and technology modernization efforts.

This objective is accomplished by investing in the transition of emerging and promising marine and Great Lakes observing technological capabilities from the mid to latter phases of research into operational status. Earlier technical development is supported by programs such as the NOAA Ocean Enterprise Accelerators [<https://ioos.noaa.gov/ioos-in-action/accelerators/>].

The U.S. IOOS Office is seeking to fund projects, subject to the availability of funds, which advance new or existing technology-based solutions that address long standing and emerging coastal observing, product development, and data management challenges. The projects will be focused on those technologies for which there are demonstrated operators or customers who commit to integrated, long term use of those technologies and open data sharing. A Transition Manager for the project should be identified and a Transition Plan will be a Year One deliverable.

Funding will be targeted to technologies that are sufficiently mature for long term operations. This announcement specifically funds activities needed to progress these technologies through the transitional stages between research and full operations such as system integration, testing, validation, and verification. Funding will not be awarded to continue projects previously funded through the Ocean Technology Transition Program.

In FY 2026-2029, it is estimated that up to \$7.5 million will be available from the U.S. IOOS Office for this competition. Multiple awards are anticipated, subject to availability of funds, in amounts up to \$400,000 per year for up to three years. Proposals not funded in the current fiscal period (Fiscal Year 2026) may be considered for funding in the next fiscal period (Fiscal Year 2027) without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

Investigators are highly encouraged to visit the U.S. IOOS Ocean Technology Transition website for more information about the program: <https://ioos.noaa.gov/project/ocean-technology-transition/>

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The mission of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS[®]) is to produce, integrate, and communicate high quality ocean, coastal and Great Lakes information that meets the safety, economic, and stewardship needs of the Nation. The work of the U.S. IOOS Enterprise supports NOAA's mission: to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, the ocean, and coasts; to share that knowledge and information with others; and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.

The Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System (ICOOS) Act of 2009 mandates the establishment of a national integrated system of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes observing systems coordinated at the federal level to benefit society. Reauthorized by the Coastal Ocean Observations and Research Act (COORA) of 2020, the system supports the public, national security, search and rescue, commerce, safety, environmental forecasting, food, energy, water quality, scientific, and resource management needs.

Decision makers, businesses, managers, scientists, and communities at local, regional, and national levels all use IOOS information tailored to their needs to:

- Improve predictions of ocean and weather conditions and their effects on coastal communities and the nation
- Improve the safety and efficiency of maritime operations
- Improve national and homeland security
- More effectively mitigate, and increase resilience to, the effects of natural and anthropogenic hazards
- Reduce public health risks
- More effectively protect and restore healthy coastal ecosystems
- Enable the sustained use of ocean and coastal resources

The IOOS Ocean Technology Transition Project (OTT) is an ongoing, multi-year effort to transition prototype ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes observing, product development, and data management technologies to sustained operations in a stepped, parallel, and scalable process that includes stakeholder engagement from industry, government, academia, and others invested in the monitoring and assessment of the nation's ocean and coastal regions.

Sustained or Operational mode is defined as the actual application of the technology in its final form and under mission requirements, ideally via commercialization of new technologies. OTT technologies include hardware and software platforms, sensors, and data management resulting in improved ocean information supporting decision making for the coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes' environments.

Within this context, the U.S. IOOS Office is managing a competitive federal funding opportunity (NOFO) to fund research and development proposals that advance ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes observing technology innovation projects designed to foster the transition of these technologies to operations mode. This funding will support technology transitions in ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes regions across the United States. A Transition Manager for the project should be identified and a Transition Plan will be a Year One deliverable.

B. Program Priorities

In FY 2026, the U.S. IOOS Office, in conjunction with the National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP), will accept applications to accelerate the transition of advanced coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes observing technologies to operations mode. Technologies which support developing and improving observation, sensors, and information capabilities for chemical, biological, and physical parameters at multiple spatial and temporal scales to monitor changing conditions in the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes will be considered.

The NOPP facilitates partnerships between Federal agencies, academia, and industry to advance ocean science research and education. Through this collaboration, Federal agencies can leverage resources to invest in priorities that fall between agency missions or that are too large for any single agency to support, and partnerships may include non-government sectors.

Specific areas of interest under this funding opportunity include, but are not limited to:

1. sensors for physical, biological, or chemical parameters, especially low-cost or accessible ocean technology (AOT) sensors
2. use of cloud-based technologies and platforms and the use of AI for analysis and QA/QC
3. use of novel autonomous vehicles/platforms
4. Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) sensors and sensor platforms including deployment of sensors on new platforms
5. Environmental DNA (eDNA) samplers and systems to improve the efficiency of sample collection, e.g. using CTDs, onboard processing, and deployment of sensors on new platforms
6. sensors for ocean acidification related measurements
7. High Frequency Radar (HFR) use impact and metrics, development, and improvement
8. novel data management, analytics, and integration to improve service delivery to customers

OTT utilizes NOAA's Readiness Levels (RL) ontology (see NOAA Administrative Order 215-105A at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-216-105b-policy-on-research-and-development-transitions>) to assess the maturity of R&D projects from research to operation, application, commercial product, or service, (Note: NOAA's Readiness Levels are similar to the Technology Readiness Levels developed by NASA) and embody the same concept for quantifying the maturity of research. RLs are used as a systematic metric/measurement system that supports assessments of the maturity of a particular IOOS technology, and enables a consistent comparison between different types of technologies. OTT specifically focuses on transitioning technology from RLs 5 through 7 to RL 8; in effect transforming the innovative research developed externally from this Program into operational elements of IOOS or other parts of NOAA. Applicants are asked to identify the RL of the technologies with which they are working. Each applicant's application should state clearly how the applicant determined that their proposed technology project is at an appropriate RL level for this funding opportunity.

Applicants should describe end-to-end projects that will result in innovations for routine operations for identified operators (e.g., small business, commercial sector, Regional Associations, and/or Federal and State Programs). A project needs to involve operators and practitioners, to the fullest extent possible, from the beginning of the project. Commitment from operators and practitioners is critical to the eventual success of each project and the transition and adoption of technology for sustained use. The applicant must show a clear path for further developing the partnerships and opportunities for transfer and/or commercialization throughout the course of the project.

To ensure that research leads to practical and valuable management outcomes, proposals must include a minimum of two investigators, a Scientific Principal Investigator and a Transition Manager/Principal Investigator. In order to ensure transition of management tools to application, the duties and responsibilities of the two PIs are presented below:

Scientific Principal Investigator: will coordinate activities such as:

- development and validation of technologies,
- deployment and testing of prototypes, and
- working with the Transition PI to refine and develop technologies based on input from end users.

Transition Principal Investigator: will be responsible for activities related to transitioning the technology toward operational application, such as:

- writing the Transition Plan,
- developing application concepts based on stakeholder outreach,
- coordination and communications with the operator and end user groups, ensuring continuous engagement in project activities (meetings, workshops), and outreach of project results, and
- ensuring that the milestones representing transition of research to operations timeline are met.

The operator(s) that will ultimately adopt technologies for operational use should demonstrate a strong interest in and commitment to the proposed technology. As the technology matures and the likelihood of success increases, the commitment of the operator(s) is expected to grow, including resource commitments to incorporate and maintain the new technology in operational settings.

Applicants to this topic must include partners from an IOOS Regional Association (RA) to qualify. The participation of an RA should be described in a Letter of Support and the RA providing the letter should be contacted no later than three weeks before the submission of the proposal to allow for sufficient coordination. Additional partners are encouraged, e.g., industry, academia, government, (including Federal, State, local, and tribal) and other private sector partners (including Non-Governmental Organizations and Foundations).

Applicants must also provide specific details regarding their quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) plan to ensure data integrity if sensor technologies are developed and how they should be regularly calibrated using approved reference materials. A plan for routine inter-calibration with partner laboratories is also encouraged for applications proposing the advancement of sensor technologies. It is important that the information produced be acceptable by the broader research community as well as end users and a plan to ensure these goals must be included in the application. Applicants shall also provide a plan for assessing the market potential for, and stakeholder satisfaction with, the transitioned technology.

Applicants are expected to commit to drafting a technical report describing an end-to-end system for the proposed technology at a regional scale. The end-to-end system described in the technical report should be scalable to a national system. The technical report will be required at the end of the project and shall include a cost and benefit analysis. This is in addition to any financial and performance project reports identified in the terms and conditions if the proposal is successfully chosen at the end of this competitive process.

Applicants are also expected to describe how the transitioned technology will result in improvements to the overall ability of the observing system to provide information, such as:

- a) significant reductions in overall cost, and
- b) significant improvements in data and information products that flow from sensors to servers and users.

C. Program Authority

The Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (Pub. L. 111-11) (“ICOOS Act” or “Act”), as amended by the Coordinated Ocean Observation and Research Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-271, Title I) (“COORA”), codified at 33 U.S.C. 3601-3610.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

In FY 2026 - 2029 it is estimated that up to \$7.5 million will be available from the U.S. IOOS Office. Multiple awards are anticipated, subject to availability of funds, in amounts up to \$400,000 per year for up to three years. The number of awards is anticipated to range from approximately three to five, and will be adjusted based on availability of funds.

Proposals not funded in the current fiscal period (Fiscal Year 2026) may be considered for funding in the next fiscal period (FY 2027) without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by a NOAA grants officer, the applicant does so at the applicant's own risk. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for any proposal preparation costs. Recipients and subrecipients are subject to all Federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to Federal financial assistance awards. Applicants must be in good standing with respect to all existing NOAA awards in order to receive funds.

B. Project/Award Period

Applicants may request funding for up to three years. Funding is contingent upon availability of funds and the satisfactory performance of the recipient, and is at the sole discretion of NOAA.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

NOAA will make awards using a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement is similar to a grant, but used when substantial federal government involvement is anticipated. This means that the recipient can expect ongoing agency collaboration, participation, or intervention in project performance beyond the normal exercise of Federal stewardship responsibilities.

If the non-Federal applicant is at an institution that has a NOAA Cooperative Institute (CI), it is allowed to submit applications that references the CI by attaching a cover letter to the application stating its desire to have the application associated with the CI. This letter should specify the name of the cooperative institute, the CI cooperative agreement number, and the NOAA-approved research theme and task that applies to the proposal. The application will use the Facilities & Administrative (F&A, or indirect cost) rate associated with the main CI agreement. If the application is selected for funding, NOAA will notify the university that a separate award will be issued with its own award number. However, the award will include two Special Award Conditions (SACs): (1) the existing University/NOAA Memorandum Of Agreement (MOA) would be incorporated by reference into the terms of the competitive award, and (2) any performance report(s) for the competitive project must follow the scheduled timetable of, and submit directly to, the IOOS Office. Report(s) will be copied to the CI's administrator when due, to be attached to the main cooperative agreement progress report as an appendix. This will allow the CI to coordinate all the projects submitted through the CI, since the terms of these awards will specify that this is a CI project via the MOA.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible funding applicants for this competition are industry, institutions of higher education, non-profit and for-profit organizations, and State, local and tribal governments. Federal agencies or institutions and foreign governments may not be the primary recipient of awards under this announcement, but they are encouraged to partner with applicants when appropriate.

If an applicant has a partner(s) who would receive funds, the lead grantee will be expected to use subcontracts or other appropriate mechanisms to provide funds to the partner(s). If a partner is a NOAA office or laboratory, the IOOS office will transfer funds internally.

Funding will not be awarded to continue projects previously funded through the Ocean Technology Program.

Applicants should note that paying for transportation, travel, or other expenses for any Federal employee are unallowable costs.

B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement

None

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages are available online as part of the NOFO announcement on grants.gov and final applications will only be accepted via submission through www.grants.gov. Applications will need to pass eRA minimum requirements in order to be accepted. Please verify all attachments meet the requirements outlined on the National Institute of Health's Grants and Funding website <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/format-attachments.htm>.

B. Content and Form of Application

1. Letter of Intent (LOI)

The purpose of the LOI process is to provide information to potential applicants on the relevance of their proposed project and the likelihood of it being competitive in advance of preparing a full application. The LOI should provide a concise description of the proposed work and its relevance to the OTT Program. Full applications will be encouraged only for LOIs deemed relevant; however, the final decision to submit a full proposal is made by the investigator. Failure to submit an LOI is not grounds for rejection of proposals, but submitting an LOI is highly recommended. The LOI should be no more than two pages (front only) in length, single spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins and should include in order the components listed below.

- (1) Tentative project title.
- (2) Name(s) phone number(s), email address(s) and institution of all Principal Investigator(s) and specification of which individual is the Lead Principal Investigator.
- (3) Approximate cost of the project.
- (4) Statement of the problem and its management relevance.
- (5) Brief summary of work to be completed and the process to plan for transition to operations.

IOOS Office Program Managers will review each LOI to determine whether it is responsive to the Program's goals, as advertised in this notice. Letters or emails to encourage or discourage a full application are scheduled to be sent out two weeks after the LOI due date.

2. Content and Form of the Full Application

The application must include the following elements, with the exception of the SF-LLL (only if applicable) and letters of support, to meet minimum requirements. Each element should be uploaded as a separate file and numbered corresponding to the order below. You must follow the instructions for each of the following specific components. All required documents must be submitted with the proposal. External documents linked within proposal materials will not be accepted for review as part of the proposal package.

1. Standard Form (SF-424) - "Application for Federal Assistance"

Format Requirements: None

Guidance: All applicants requesting direct funding must submit the Standard Form 424 (R&R), (SF-424 R&R), "Application for Federal Assistance," to indicate the total amount of funding proposed for their institution for the whole project period. This form is to be the cover page for the original proposal and is the first required form in the Grants.gov proposal package. The form can be downloaded at <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family> in the Forms Repository section under the R&R Family hyperlink. For a NOAA and non-NOAA Federal partner, applications for Federal assistance (SF-424 (R&R) and the Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Budget Form, must show the total amount less what would go to the Federal partner.

2. Title Page

Format Requirements: Single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, one (1) page maximum.

Guidance: Include proposal title, complete contact information for the Principal Investigator and Financial Representative, duration of proposed project, the funding request by year, and the total funds requested. If funds are to be transferred to a NOAA or other Federal partner on the project, also state the amount to the Federal partner on the cover.

3. Abstract

Format Requirements: Single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, 5 sentences maximum

Guidance: Provide a very brief, high-level summary of the proposal in 3-5 sentences. The abstract should be written using plain language for a broad, non-technical audience and highlight the main goal of the proposed work and societal impacts.

4. Project Summary

Format Requirements: Single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, two (2) page maximum

Guidance: The summary should be prepared to be readable to a broad audience and contain the following sections:

1. Project Name/Title
2. Primary Contact (name, address, telephone, fax, e-mail)
3. Primary Recipient Institution
4. Other Investigators (name, affiliated institution or agency)
5. Brief Project Summary including objectives and intended benefits
6. Name and affiliation of the Transition Manager
7. Partners

5. Proposal Narrative and Milestones Schedule

Format Requirements: Single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, 10 pages maximum. The 10-page limit does not include the proposal title page, table of contents, the data sharing plan, the project summary,

Guidance: All project narratives must include the following sections and should be clear and concise, focusing on the who, what, when, where, why and how of the proposed work, including the description of the proposed scope of work.

1. **Goals and Objectives.** Describe in the narrative the specific project goals and objectives to be achieved. Goals and objectives should be specific for each year of the work plan presented. Recipients will be required to submit semi-annual progress reports in which progress against these goals and objectives will be reported.

2. **Background.** Provide sufficient background information for proposal reviewers to assess independently the significance of the proposed project. Summarize the problem to be addressed and the status of ongoing efforts to address the identified needs. Identify the current readiness level of the technology and the anticipated level at the end of the project and how you determined these levels.
3. **Audience.** Identify specific users of the results of the project, describe how they will use the results, and identify any training or extension services that will be needed for users to make full use of the results.
4. **Approach.** Provide a work plan that: identifies specific tasks to be accomplished; explains the technical approach (including quality assurance) needed to accomplish the tasks; identifies partner roles and contributions, including resources; and identifies potential obstacles to successful completion of the goals and objectives. Describe how end-users are involved in the planning and design process. If the project includes Federal partners, the roles, responsibilities and contributions of the Federal partners must be clearly identified.
5. **Benefits.** Identify, with a high degree of specificity, the users of the products or information derived from the work, and the benefits that will be achieved for those users, as well as society as a whole. Document how valid user requirements are guiding the proposed work. Describe how the technologies or information from the project will be delivered to those users, and any special considerations or requirements for ensuring or improving the delivery of the technology or information. If relevant, describe plans to commercialize the project results.
6. **Milestone Schedule.** Display time lines for major tasks, target milestones for important intermediate and final products including deliverables and key project outcomes.
7. **Project Budget.** Provide a short budget description that follows the categories and formats in the Research & Related Budget Form (Total Fed + Non-Fed) and a brief justification of the budget.

6. Data Management Plan

Format Requirements: Single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, 2 pages maximum.

Guidance: If the project generates data. The Proposal must provide a detailed Data Management Plan that describes how metadata and data collected as part of the project will be disseminated to the broader community, and plans for longer term archiving of these data. PIs that propose to collaborate with data centers or networks, except the National Center for Environmental Information, are advised to obtain letters of commitment that affirm the collaboration. Where possible, all PIs are strongly encouraged to use existing data centers and data portals to archive and disseminate their data. Costs associated with use of data centers, or data archiving, should be included in the application budget. See <https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/about/funding-opportunities/data-management-plan/> for more information.

See Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, below for additional information on what the plan should contain.

7. References Cited

Format Requirements: None

Guidance: Each reference should include the names of all authors in the same sequence they appear in the publications, the article title, the journal or book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publications. While there is no established page limitation, this section should include bibliographic citations only and should not be used to provide parenthetical information outside of the Project Description.

8. Resumes

Format Requirements: Single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, three (3) pages maximum, per person.

Guidance: Provide resumes of the Principal Investigator for the project and other key personnel critical to the success of the project. Ensure that resumes address qualifications relevant to conducting the proposed work.

9. Letters of Support (optional):

Format Requirements: None

Guidance: Letters from unfunded collaborators, verifying their contribution to the project, or letters of support may also be included, but are not required.

10. Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Form:

Format Requirements: None

Guidance: All applicants are required to submit a Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Budget Form, which identifies the budget for each fiscal year of the primary proposal. A new Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) form is required for each fiscal year in sections A - D for the primary award. The form can be downloaded at <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family> in the Forms Repository section under the "R&R Family" hyperlink.

11. Research & Related Subaward Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form

Format Requirements: None

Guidance: Required for each subaward (if applicable, and for each fiscal year of the project. The form can be downloaded at <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family> in the Forms Repository section under the "R&R Family" hyperlink.

12. Budget Narrative

Format Requirements: Single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins.

Guidance: All proposals must include a detailed budget narrative covering the proposed period of performance with a justification to support all proposed budget categories for each fiscal year. The Budget Narrative must match the same direct cost categories as the Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Budget and the Research & Related Subaward Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Attachment(s) forms for the primary and each subaward.

A separate budget narrative is required for each subaward (all subawards, including lower tier subawards) and any NOAA partner receiving funding. The lead institution must include the subaward and NOAA partner budget narratives as a separate document. The work to be performed by the partner must be reflected separately in the Proposal Narrative and partner budget. Subaward budget totals should be included in the lead entity's budget under the "Other" category. Do not include NOAA partner budgets into the lead's budget. A Research & Related Subaward Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Attachment(s) form and indirect cost rate agreement (if applicable) should accompany the budget narrative specific to each subaward or NOAA partner.

For additional information concerning each of the required budget categories and appropriate level of disclosure please see https://coast.noaa.gov/data/coasthome/funding/_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-for-NOAA-grants.pdf. Please note that internal references to 2 CFR 200 have not been updated in the budget narrative guidance to be compliant with recent changes (October 1, 2024). The document is otherwise applicable to developing a budget for a grant application. For the most current information, please refer to 2 CFR 200 at <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2> (e.g., the current equipment minimum value threshold is \$10,000, the current de minimis indirect cost rate is 15%).

The lead institution will be the only institution to directly receive funds from NOAA and is responsible for sending funds to their other subaward institutions, except for funded NOAA partners which may be funded directly by NOAA. If funding will be directed to NOAA partners, the budget narrative for the lead institution must show the total amount less what would go to the NOAA partner as noted above for Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) form (Sec. IV.B.10).

13. CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying

Format Requirements: None

Guidance: Required only for the lead institution, which may submit this form through the Grants.gov CD511 document placeholder without a hard signature because electronic signatures are allowed on documents from the submitting institution. The form can be downloaded at: <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>.

14. SF-424B: Assurances - Non-Construction Programs

Format Requirements: None

Guidance: Required only for the lead institution, which may submit this form through the Grants.gov SF-424B document placeholder without a hard signature because electronic signatures are allowed on documents from the submitting institutions. The form can be downloaded at <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>.

15. SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if needed)

Format Requirements: None

Guidance: Required only If lobbying activity is or has been secured to influence the outcome of a covered federal action, complete the SF-LLL standard lobbying disclosure form found at <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family> and include it with your proposal package.

16. Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for NOAA Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity Applicants

Format Requirement: Use the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for NOAA Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity Applicants (hereinafter NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire) which can be found at: <https://www.noaa.gov/general-counsel/nepa>. A fillable version of the NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire is available at: <https://ioos.noaa.gov/about/funding-opportunities>.

Guidance: The NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire is used by NOAA to collect information about proposed activities for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental compliance requirements associated with the proposal, including but not limited to federal consultations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA).

Applicants are required to respond to questions 1-14 (Proposed Activity-Information, Proposed Activity-Location, Proposed Activity-Timeframe, Project Partners, Permits, and Consultations, and Proposed Activity Details and Impacts-All activities). Applicants are also required to respond to questions 15-81 as applicable to the proposed project.

Applicants should answer the questions to the best of their ability with as much detail as possible for each activity described in the NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire. Some of the questions may overlap with material provided in other parts of the application. As appropriate, please copy the information from other parts of the application and paste it into the answers to the NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire. If a question required under the NOFO is not applicable to your proposed activity, please explain why the requested information is not relevant. Failure to do so or failure to answer questions required under the NOFO in sufficient detail may result in NOAA considering your application incomplete.

In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application.

It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all permits and approvals from Federal, state, and local governments as well as private landowners where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted.

If additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the NOAA Grants Officer or activities may be restricted under a specific award condition.

Additional information on the IOOS environmental compliance process is found at: <https://ioos.noaa.gov/about/governance-and-management/environmental-compliance/>.

Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan (up to 2 pages). See Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, below for additional information on what the plan should contain.

C. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Any applicant awarded in response to this Announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at <https://sam.gov/SAM/>. SAM enables the use of a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and to build the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6106 Note, to the extent applicable.

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or federal awarding agency that is exempted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its proposal, which takes an average of 7-10 business days after entering all information into SAM and requires the applicant's Employer Identification Number; (ii) provide a valid UEI in its proposal; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or a proposal or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. SAM registration must be re-validated and renewed every 12 months.

Applicants are advised to complete SAM registration or renewal well in advance of the full proposal deadline. For UEI registration visit this link, https://sam.directory/UEI?gclid=CjwKCAjw_b6WBhAQEiwAp4HyIJaUI9DfZ6GgKVQxxe%20LeLsp72ZneUyTrcA7qQsOB_vQdGh9Z8B_XIRoCm-0QAvD_BwE.

NOAA may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Letters of Intent (LOI) are highly recommended but not required. The requested letters of intent (LOI) should be submitted via this Google Form. The form must be received by 11:59 PM (EDT) on April 27, 2026.

The form to submit an LOI can be found at <https://forms.gle/8dB4jY1dLwrPiNQC9> (Copy and paste this link into your web browser). Please contact the Program Manager at tiffany.c.vance@noaa.gov if you have any problems submitting this form.

Full proposals must be received no later than 11:59 PM (EDT) on July 15, 2026.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable.

F. Funding Restrictions

Since this announcement solicits applications for financial assistance, profit or other increment above cost may not be included on awards.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicant organizations must complete and maintain three registrations to be eligible to apply for or receive an award. These registrations include SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and eRA Commons. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. The complete registration process for all three systems can take 4 to 6 weeks, so applicants should begin this activity as soon as possible. Please refer to important information in "Submission Dates and Times" above to help ensure your application is received on time. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

Grants.gov will provide information about submitting a proposal through the site as well as the hours of operation. After electronic submission of the application, the person submitting the application will receive within 24 to 48 hours two email messages from Grants.gov updating him or her on the progress of the application. The first email will confirm receipt of the application by Grants.gov, and the second will indicate that the application has been either successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency or rejected due to errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive another email when the application has been downloaded by the Federal agency. An organization's one-time registration process may take up to three weeks to complete, so please allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date.

Prior to registering with eRA Commons, applicant organizations must first obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov, if needed (refer to Section IV. Applications and Submission Information, Section C). Instructions on how to register in eRA Commons can be found here:

<https://www.commerce.gov/ocio/programs/gems/register-your-organization-era-commons>.

Organizations can register with eRA Commons in tandem with completing their full SAM and Grants.gov registrations; however, all registrations must be in place by time of application submission. eRA Commons requires organizations to identify at least one Signing Official (SO) and at least one Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account in order to submit an application.

The first PD/PI listed on the application must include their eRA Commons ID in the "Credential, e.g. agency login" Applicant Identifier field on the SF424 form. Failure to register in the Commons and to include a valid PD/PI Commons ID in the Applicant Identifier field will prevent the successful submission of an electronic application.

H. Address for Submitting Proposals

Full application packages must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Hard copy, faxed or emailed submissions will not be accepted.

V. Application Review Information

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals	Maximum Points: 35
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This ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, State, and/or local activities. This includes importance and relevance to the topics and scientific priorities described in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Proposed projects will be assessed on their ability to advance new or existing technology-based solutions that address ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes observing, product development, and data management challenges. Funding will be targeted to projects focused on: 1) technologies for which there are demonstrated operational end-users who commit to integrated, long term use of those technologies and open data sharing; 2) are transitioning technology from R&D through 8; 3) and include partners from at least one IOOS Regional Association, academia, and the private sector. The PI's record of making his/her technologies and data accessible and used by the scientific community in the past may also be considered when evaluating the importance and relevance of the application.

2. Technical/scientific merit

Maximum Points: 35

This assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, whether the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. The proposed work should have focused objectives and a complete and technically sound strategy for project design, methodologies, data management (including QA/QC), data analysis, and development of products and outcomes in support of the objectives. The proposed work should demonstrate the technology is mature and proven for consideration in longterm operations.

3. Overall qualifications of applicants

Maximum Points: 10

This criterion assesses whether the applicant team possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

4. Project costs

Maximum Points: 10

This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame.

5. Outreach and Education

Maximum Points: 10

This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding agency missions, including NOAA's mission to understand and protect the Nation's natural resources. Education can include plans for development of technical workforce capacity to work with the technology that the project will deliver. Broader Impacts addresses actions that will enhance the potential of the projects to meet the goals of recent Executive Orders, benefit society, and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired outcomes.

Evaluation Criteria

Review and Selection Process

Screening, review, and selection procedures will take place in four steps described below: 1) LOI (optional) 2) an initial screening by U.S. IOOS Office staff; 3) a merit review; and 4) final selection by the Selecting Official (the Director of the U.S. IOOS Office). The merit review step will involve at least three reviewers per application. The Selecting Official will make the final decision regarding which applications will be funded based on the numerical ranking of the applications, the evaluations by the merit reviewers, and the selection factors set in Section V.C., below.

- **Letter of Intent (LOI).** An LOI is not required but is highly recommended. The purpose of the LOI process is to provide information to potential applicants on the relevance of their proposed project and the likelihood of it being competitive in advance of preparing a full application. Full applications will be encouraged only for LOIs deemed relevant; however, the final decision to submit a full proposal, and the investment needed, is made by the investigator. The LOI should provide a concise description of the proposed work and its relevance to the OTT Program.
- **Initial Proposal Screening.** The initial screening will ensure that application packages have all required forms and application elements and meet all of the eligibility criteria in accordance with “Section B: Content and Form of Application.” Applications that pass this initial screening will be submitted for merit review.
- **Merit Review.** Eligible full applications will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria and weights described in this solicitation by at least three independent peer reviewers through an independent peer panel. Each reviewer will independently evaluate their assigned proposals, compose written reviews, and provide individual proposal scores. Both federal and non-federal experts may be used in this process. No consensus advice will be given by the independent peer reviewers on the review panels. Subject matter experts will comprise the panel and may convene in person or by teleconference, video conference, or electronic means. Each proposal will be reviewed by a minimum of three panelists. All panelists will participate in the proposal’s panel review and scoring. The merit review’s ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals.
- **Final Selection.** The U.S. IOOS Office staff will create a ranking of the proposals to be recommended for funding using the panel review scores. The reviewer comments, composite proposal scores, rank order, and a summary of the concerns (if any) identified through the panel review process along with information pertaining to selection factors (see below) will be presented to the Selecting Official. Based on the numerical ranking, merit-review written evaluations, and the additional selection factors described below, the Selecting Official will develop a list of proposals recommended for funding. For a proposal to be selected for funding, the applicant may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, and budgets, and to provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. When a decision has been made (whether an award or declination), anonymous copies of merit review comments or summaries of panel deliberations can be made available to the applicant upon request.

Selection Factors

The competition manager will present selection recommendations to the selecting official in rank order as determined by the merit review ratings. The selection official shall award in rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding
2. Balance/distribution of funds:
 - a. By number and type of partners
 - b. By project type
 - c. By operational focus
 - d. By type of institutions

- e. By geographic region
 - f. By industry type
3. Leveraging of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal agencies
 4. Project priorities and policy factors
 5. Applicant's prior award performance
 6. Partnerships with/participation of targeted groups
 7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a determination about the environmental impacts of the project on the environment and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

The Selecting Official makes final recommendations for awards to the Grants Officer who is authorized to obligate the funds.

Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The anticipated start date for projects is January 1, 2027.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The Notice of Award (NoA) is issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA's electronic grants management system, eRA Commons, to the signing official in the recipient organization's business office.

In addition, the award document provided by NOAA may contain Specific Award Conditions unique to a proposed work that will be applied on a case-by-case basis. For example, the award may include conditions that limit the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements or stating other compliance requirements for the award as applicable. The applicant is strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

Official notification of an award is provided by the Grants Management Division, not the U.S. IOOS Office. If a project incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement from an authorized NOAA grant official, one would do so solely at their own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

PRE-AWARD COSTS. Per 2 CFR 200.458, NOAA authorizes award recipients to expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the period of performance start date at the applicant's own risk without approval from NOAA and in accordance with the applicant's internal policies and procedures. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award. This does not include direct proposal costs (as defined at 2 CFR 200.460). In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for direct proposal preparation costs. Pre-award costs will be a portion of, not in addition to, the approved total budget of the award. Pre-award costs expended more than 90 days prior to the period of performance start date require approval from the Grants Officer. This does not change the period of performance start date.

GRANTS OFFICER SIGNATURE. Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are not considered awards until the Grants Officer has signed the grant agreement. Only Grants Officers can bind the Government to the expenditure of funds. The Grants Officer's digital signature constitutes an obligation of funds by the federal government and formal approval of the award.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY. Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of funds. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS.

Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which applies to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

RESEARCH TERMS AND CONDITIONS. For awards designated on the CD-450 as Research, the Commerce Terms, and the Federal-wide Research Terms and Conditions (Research Terms) as implemented by the Department of Commerce, currently, at <https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>, both apply to the award. The Commerce Terms and the Research Terms are generally intended to harmonize with each other; however, where the Commerce Terms and the Research Terms differ in a Research award, the Research Terms prevail, unless otherwise indicated in a specific award condition.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PRE-AWARD NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in eRA at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy>.

BUREAU TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept an award under this solicitation will be bound by bureau-specific standard terms and conditions. These terms and conditions will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system. For NOAA awards only, the Administrative Standard Award Conditions for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Financial Assistance Awards U.S. Department of Commerce are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/financial-assistance>

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA). NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

DATA SHARING PLAN. 1. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards. 2. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets. 3. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data. 4. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

More information can be found on NOAA's Data Management Procedures at:

https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0_remediated.pdf and at NAO 212-15 Management of Environmental Data and Information:

<https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-212-15-management-of-environmental-data-and-information>

NOAA SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY. NOAA requires organizations receiving federal assistance to report findings of sexual harassment, or any other kind of harassment, regarding a Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or any other key personnel in the award.

NOAA expects all financial assistance recipients to establish and maintain clear and unambiguous standards of behavior to ensure harassment free workplaces wherever NOAA grant or cooperative agreement work is conducted, including notification pathways for all personnel, including students, on the awards. This expectation includes activities at all on- and offsite facilities and during conferences and workshops. All such settings should have accessible and evident means for reporting violations and recipients should exercise due diligence with timely investigations of allegations and corrective actions.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/noaa-workplace-harassment-training-for-contractors-and-financial>.

SCIENCE INTEGRITY. 1. Maintaining Integrity. The non-Federal entity shall maintain the scientific integrity of research performed pursuant to this grant or financial assistance award including the prevention, detection, and remediation of any allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, and the conduct of inquiries, investigations, and adjudications of allegations of violations of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. All the requirements of this provision flow down to subrecipients. 2. Peer Review. The peer review of the results of scientific activities under a NOAA grant, financial assistance award or cooperative agreement shall be accomplished to ensure consistency with NOAA standards on quality, relevance, scientific integrity, reproducibility, transparency, and performance. NOAA will ensure that peer review of "influential scientific information" or "highly influential scientific assessments" is conducted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review and NOAA policies on peer review, such as the Information Quality Guidelines. 3. In performing or presenting the results of scientific activities under the NOAA grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement and in responding to allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, the non-Federal entity and all subrecipients shall comply with the provisions herein and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-735D, Scientific Integrity, and its Procedural Handbook, including any amendments thereto. That Order can be found at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-202-735d-2-scientific-integrity>. 4. Primary Responsibility. The non-Federal entity shall have the primary responsibility to prevent, detect, and investigate allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. Unless otherwise instructed by the grants officer, the non-Federal entity shall promptly conduct an initial inquiry into any allegation of such misconduct and may rely on its internal policies and procedures, as appropriate, to do so. 5. By executing this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement the non-Federal entity provides its assurance that it has established an administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigating, and reporting allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct; and that it will comply with its own administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigation, and reporting of such misconduct. 6. The non-Federal entity shall insert this provision in all subawards at all tiers under this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement.

REVIEW OF RISK. After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.206. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments about any information concerning organizational performance listed in the Responsibility/Qualification section of SAM.gov for consideration by the awarding agency.

REVIEWS AND EVALUATION. The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with the Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with §200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

RELEASE OF APPLICATION INFORMATION. Privileged or confidential commercial or financial information, patentable ideas, or trade secrets, disclosure of which may harm the applicant, should be included in the proposal only when such information is necessary to convey an understanding of the proposed work. In the event that a proposal contains information or data that the applicant does not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the proposal, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. A proposal that results in an award will be available to the public on request, except for privileged information or material that is personal, proprietary, or otherwise exempt from disclosure under law. Appropriate labeling in the proposal aids identification of what may be specifically exempt. Such information will be withheld from public disclosure to the extent permitted by law, including the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, and 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for the Department of Commerce to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA.

Without assuming any liability for inadvertent disclosure, NOAA will seek to limit disclosure of such information to its employees and contractors, and to outside reviewers when necessary for merit review of the proposal or as otherwise authorized by law. Portions of proposals resulting in awards that contain descriptions of inventions in which either the Government or the funding recipient owns a right, title, or interest (including a nonexclusive license) will not normally be made available to the public until a reasonable time has been allowed for filing patent applications. NOAA will notify the recipient of receipt of requests for copies of funded proposals so the recipient may advise NOAA of such inventions described, or other confidential, commercial, or proprietary information contained in the proposal.

NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the data management plan from funded projects, or use information from the data management plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed, and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with the the Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. Following 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

GOLD STANDARD SCIENCE. In performing activities under Federal awards, applicants should commit to complying with administration policies, procedures, and guidance respecting Gold Standard Science. As detailed in Executive Order 14303, Restoring Gold Standard Science (May 23, 2025), Gold Standard Science refers to science conducted in a manner that is:

Reproducible.

Transparent.

Communicative of error and uncertainty.

Collaborative and interdisciplinary.

Skeptical of its findings and assumptions.

Structured for falsifiability of hypotheses.

Subject to unbiased peer review.

Accepting of negative results as positive outcomes.

Without conflicts of interest.

TERMINATION. In accordance with 2 CFR § 200.340(a), this federal award may be terminated in part or in its entirety as follows:

a. By DOC or the pass-through entity if the recipient or subrecipient fails to comply with the terms and conditions of this federal award.

b. By DOC or the pass-through entity with the consent of the recipient or subrecipient, in which case the two parties must agree upon the termination conditions. These conditions include the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.

c. By the recipient or subrecipient upon sending DOC or the pass-through entity a written notification of the reasons for termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. If DOC or the pass-through entity determines that the remaining portion of this federal award will not accomplish the purposes for which this federal award was made, DOC or the pass-through entity may terminate this federal award in its entirety.

d. By DOC or the pass-through entity to the extent authorized by law, if the award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.

PROHIBITION ON USING FEDERAL AWARDS TO PROMOTE OR SUPPORT THEORIES OF DISPARATE-IMPACT LIABILITY. In accordance with Executive Order 14281, Restoring Equality of Opportunity and Meritocracy (April 23, 2025), it is the policy of the Federal Government to eliminate the use of disparate-impact liability in all contexts to the maximum possible and permitted by law.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 14173: ENDING ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION AND RESTORING MERIT-BASED OPPORTUNITY. Pursuant to Executive Order 14173, 90 FR 8633 (Jan. 21, 2025), Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, each recipient that accepts a U.S. Department of Commerce financial assistance award: (1) agrees that compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of Title 31 United States Code; and (2) certifies to the Department that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

C. Reporting

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.328-9 and the terms and conditions of the award, financial reports are to be submitted semi-annually and performance (technical) reports are to be submitted semi-annually. Reports are submitted electronically through eRA.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all subawards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions regarding this announcement, contact: Jennifer Hinden, U.S. IOOS, Jennifer.Hinden@noaa.gov.

For information on establishing Indirect or Facilities and Administrative Costs, contact: Jennifer Jackson, NOAA Grants Management Division, Jennifer.Jackson@noaa.gov.

eRA Service Desk

- Phone: 866-504-9552 (option 1)
- [Grant Support Portal](https://www.era.nih.gov/need-help) for additional methods of contact (<https://www.era.nih.gov/need-help>)
- Monday-Friday, 7am-8pm EST

eRA Commons Trainings

<https://www.commerce.gov/ocio/programs/gems/about-gems>

eRA Commons User Guide

https://www.era.nih.gov/docs/Commons_UserGuide.pdf

VIII. Other Information

Not Applicable